

**2nd Press Statement of the Elections Situation Room
Liberia Elections Early Warning & Response Group (LEEWARG)
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Liberia)
December 26, 2017**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

On December 25th, the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP), in collaboration with partners, resumed operations of the “Liberia Elections Early Warning and Response Group (LEEWARG) Election Situation Room(LEEWARG ESR)” for the scheduled December 26 runoff election. The Situation Room is WANEP and partners’ contribution to a peaceful electoral process in Liberia. The Situation Room for the December 26th Run-off is being hosted at the ECOWAS Commission Office in Liberia, with the kind support from the United Nations Missions in Liberia (UNMIL). Monitors/observers are deployed throughout the fifteen counties at various polling sites.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

On December 26th the day of the scheduled Run-off, Presidential Election the following key observations were made:

1. Voting turn out has been generally low in all the centers monitored so far.
2. Voting generally started on time in all the centers monitored. However, in the case of Legbanga Polling Center, Lofa County District # 1, Polling Place 3 as of 12:00 Noon the FRR was not available. As a consequence, voting started late. In Biafra community, Grand Bassa County, there was no voter turn out up to 11:30am; even though poll workers were in place.
3. In Bassa Community, Maryland county, 6 voters were not allowed to vote because their names were not on the FRR. Also, a 22 year old

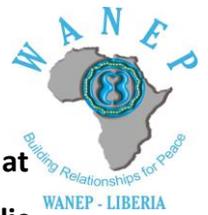
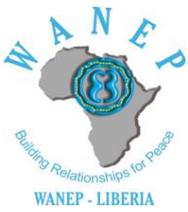
male was arrested for attempting to vote a second time, using a different voting card. He had voted earlier at 8:20am.

4. At St. Mary's Elementary School, Polling Center, #33149, Nimba County, Police arrested ballot issuer on complaints of directing voters. Information provided during investigation indicates that polling staff was working on another person's name.
5. The queue controllers were effective in helping voters to identify their polling centers coupled with increase of cubicles at every polling place made the process of voting orderly and rapid. In the case, Beletah Palava Hut - #06005, Bong County, Polling place #2 there was no Queue Controller. Presiding Officer and Electoral Supervisor were notified.
6. In Montserrado County District # 3, Polling Place #1- 30276, previously located at Sacca Building was relocated at Macdonell Senior High School, without prior notice. This resulted to late start of voting.
7. It was reported that representatives of political parties are present at most polling places.
8. It was observed that security sector personnel were deployed at various polling centers and there were no reports of violence

INTERVENTION:

The Election situation room led by WANEP and partners took the following actions:

1. Followed up with NEC on reports from the field monitors and observers on the late opening of polling centers and other irregularities.
2. Visited polling centers in Monrovia and environs as well as counties covered.
3. We encourage voters to turn out and vote using the electronic media (Radio) and social media respectively.



4. Issued a press release on December 25, 2017 and held a press conference at ECOWAS Commission Office on December 26, 2017 to inform the public about the electoral process. Additional press conferences will be held daily for the duration of the electoral process and thereafter.

CONCLUSION

The Liberia Election Early Warning Response Group (LEEWARG) and its partners extend thanks and appreciation to the Unity Party and the Coalition for Democratic Change and their partisans for the level of cordiality and maturity demonstrated so far.

We also use this opportunity to appeal to all Liberians to be cautious of information disseminated on social media regarding the ongoing electoral process which has the propensity to undermine the peace and security.

LEEWARG calls on all Liberians to turn out and vote before ending of the process underway on December 26th.

The Situation Room has made available the following Hot Lines for the public to use when necessary

0555 – 022 – 320

0777 – 977 - 167

We call on all Liberians to remain calm and peaceful.

Signed: _____

Ambassador William R. Tolbert III

Co-Chairperson – LEEWARG